

Example of gll205ch essay

[Experience](#), [Happiness](#)



Poem Analysis (TOPIC A)

There are several causes that led Matthew, the lead character in both *The Fountain* and *The Two April Mornings* by William Wordsworth, to wallow in deep sadness, which he seeks to overcome. In the first poem, Matthew is contemplating about the end of his own life. At 72 years old, Matthew is very much aware that he does not have much time left, which is why he is reminding the speaker, both of them aptly described as “[a] pair of friends” (line 3), that “ With Nature never do they wage / A foolish strife; they see / A happy youth, and their old age / Is beautiful and free:” (lines 41-44).

Matthew, in the foregoing lines, expressed that nature provides all humans with the opportunity to live lives filled with happiness, in youth and old age. However, Matthew followed that up, saying, “ But we are pressed by heavy laws; / And often, glad no more, / We wear a face of joy, because / We have been glad of yore” (lines 45-48). The “ heavy laws” Matthew speaks about ironically consists of the law of nature on mortality, which provides a severe limitation of life through death and its inevitability.

In the second poem, Matthew talks about the death of his daughter as he visited her grave. Matthew first entered into a contemplative stance about his own life, describing the April morning of the setting as “ A day like this which I have left / Full thirty years behind” (lines 23-24). It is from said lines where one could identify the origin of the title of the poem, which points both to the April morning of the setting and the April morning in the memory of Matthew. Alternatively, one could discern the foregoing when Matthew said, “ And just above yon slope of corn / Such colors, and no other / Were in the sky, that April morn, / Of this the very brother” (lines 25-28). The regrets

Matthew held for his dead daughter was deeply emphasized, for which he said, “ Nine summers had she scarcely seen, / The pride of all the vale; / And then she sang;--she would have been / A very nightingale” (lines 33-36).

Discernable from the foregoing lines is the fact that the daughter of Matthew died young – at nine years of age, he articulated that she would have lived a fuller life, and that he would have been less lonely in his old age had he seen her grow up gracefully. What made Matthew even sadder is the fact that he saw a young girl that reminded him so much of his dead daughter, in the very same cemetery where her grave is. “ And turning from her grave, I met, / Beside the church-yard yew, / A blooming girl, whose hair was wet / With points of morning dew” (lines 41-44). The sight of the young girl brought Matthew with so much memories of his dead daughter, for which he clearly expressed his despair, “ There came from me a sigh of pain / Which I could ill confine; / I looked at her, and looked again: / And did not wish her mine!” (lines 53-56). The pang in the heart that Matthew felt is highly evident in the foregoing lines, for which he did not mince his words in expressing his sadness.

In both poems as well, the sunny disposition of the settings provide proper contrasts to the rather dark emotions felt by Matthew, within both of which he was never sunny himself at all. The eternal running of the fountain and the blackbird and the lark singing in the tree and hill both describe the awareness of Matthew towards the ethereality of life, for which he used both as contrasting themes to the termination ultimately provided by death. The constancy of both the fountain and the singing of both the blackbird and the lark also contrasts the progression of life, for which Matthew contemplated

on the things that he cannot change that happened when he was younger, which in turn made him reflect on his old age. The nature of Matthew as “ a man of mirth,” or someone who is filled with happiness, made him even sadder in light of the general theme of both *The Fountain* and *The Two April Mornings*. The feeling of happiness, which can only be felt by the living, disappears in the face of death; Matthew, being a person filled with happiness, is mulling over death as something that could stop him from feeling every happy again.

The song that contains lyrics with terms such as “ the crazy old-church clock” and “ bewildered chimes,” who the speaker in *The Fountain* asked for Matthew to sing, talks about the constant running of time and the turbulence of events that characterize life, in general. As said lyrics were eventually sung by Matthew at the end, one could interpret those in light of his old age. Matthew constantly spoke of his regrets in life and his happy nature amid his old age; his desire to live longer is given due recognition in that regard, given his fear that death would disable him from becoming happy. Moreover, the rejection of Matthew in both *The Fountain* and *The Two April Mornings*, that of the offer of the speaker to be his son in the former and his denial of the resemblance of his dead daughter he saw in the young child in the latter, emphasizes both his sense of avoiding emotional attachments and evasion from reminders of his past. Furthermore, the contrasting endings of both poems emphasizes both the different settings involved, in that *The Fountain* focuses on the melancholy of Matthew as he approaches the end of his life, while *The Two April Mornings* emphasizes on facing death, starting from his visit to the grave of his dead daughter. While sadness may be difficult to

overcome in both poems, one could see that the speaker, with his relatively younger age vis-à-vis his positive feelings towards the experiences of Matthew, is inspired to live his life in a fulfilling manner, given that he still has more years ahead.